

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, while I would be happy to report all of the good news about today's economy, it would certainly take me more than 1 minute.

By decreasing taxes and eliminating unnecessary government regulations, President Bush and Republican leaders have created strong economic growth that has delivered a long list of benefits to the American families.

Four point five million new jobs have been created since May 2003. Home sales reached a record high in October with the highest percentage of American home ownership in history. Consumer prices decreased last month by 0.6 percent, the largest decrease since 1949. Energy prices recently dropped by 8 percent. The unemployment rate is lower than the average of the past 3 decades. The economy grew at 4.3 percent over the last 10 quarters. Productivity soared in the last quarter by 4.7 percent, reducing fears of inflation.

Although we are pleased about these excellent economic indicators, we are not satisfied. House Republicans will continue to promote policies that create jobs for all American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

DRILLING IN THE ARCTIC

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the drilling for oil in the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge, called by the Gwich'in Tribe "the Sacred Place Where All Life Begins" will disrupt caribou calving grounds, lead to the long-term decline not only of the herd, but of the Gwich'in Tribe which depends on the herd for survival.

Christian teaching tells us to do unto others as we would have them do unto ourselves. We learn from other spiritual insights that what we do unto others we actually do to ourselves. We cannot in the consciousness of true American spirit return to a history of exploitation of native tribes anymore than we could return to a history of slavery or a history where women had no rights.

We must make our stand now to change our path by changing who we are. When we perpetrate acts of violence onto others we are damaging ourselves as humans. We cannot do this to the Arctic Refuge because it will destroy the land, it will destroy the herd, it will destroy the tribe. Another part of the true America will die.

We must not only search for alternative energy. We must search for an alternative way to live. We must escape this cycle of destruction. We must reconcile with nature in this season of peace. We must find a new path to peace on Earth with our native brothers and sisters and within ourselves.

CHRISTMAS 1776

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, one week from today is Christmas, and on Christmas in 1776, Americans were at war for freedom. General Washington and his colonials crossed the Delaware River into New Jersey and defeated the British who were caught celebrating.

This Christmas Americans are at war for freedom in lands far, far away. They, like Washington's men, will not be home for Christmas.

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance, they say. The price is also counted in the cost of human sacrifice. Our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan that will never return for another Christmas gave their lives for the same ideas that Washington's men gave their lives for. We call it freedom. Mr. Speaker, you notice I say gave their lives, not lost their lives, because their lives were voluntarily sacrificed on the altar of liberty.

In the War of Independence, 4,600 Americans died, and in all wars for freedom, over 1.5 million Americans have died. They gave their youth for freedom's future. So, as the church bells ring this Sunday before Christmas, let us be reminded of the ring of the Liberty Bell that tolls the words: "Let freedom ring throughout the land."

That's just the way it is.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Iraqi people for their third successful democratic election, the United States Armed Services men and women, and the American people who support our military and their families.

Mr. Speaker, democracy dealt terrorism another major blow on Thursday with the successful free Iraqi election. This election was a crucial victory for Iraq's new democracy and a defeat for terrorists who seek to destroy that democracy. The Iraqi people have proven they long for freedom and continue to fight the terrorists who wish to take their freedom away, and with the continued help of American and coalition forces, Congress and the President, Iraq will soon be a prosperous and freedom-loving Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the valiant heroics of our military and the sacrifices they have made to ensure our safety. They have fought bravely and served honorably. No one can ever dispute the character of our Armed Forces.

I salute the Iraqis for taking the next step toward a free nation and our Armed Forces for helping them.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 631 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 631

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of Sunday, December 18, 2005, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules relating to the following measures:

(1) The bill (H.R. 1185) to reform the Federal deposit insurance system, and for other purposes.

(2) A bill to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant program through March 31, 2006, and for other purposes.

(3) The resolution (H. Res. 545) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the arrest of Sanjar Umarov in Uzbekistan.

(4) The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 284) expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Egypt.

(5) The bill (H.R. 4501) to amend the Passport Act of June 4, 1920, to authorize the Secretary of State to establish and collect a surcharge to cover the costs of meeting the increased demand for passports as a result of actions taken to comply with section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

(6) The bill (S. 1988) to authorize the transfer of items in the War Reserves Stockpile for Allies, Korea.

(7) The bill (H.R. 2329) to permit eligibility in certain circumstances for an officer or employee of a foreign government to receive a reward under the Department of State Rewards Program.

(8) A resolution honoring Helen Sewell on the occasion of her retirement from the House of Representatives and expressing the gratitude of the House for her many years of service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

This resolution provides that certain specified measures may be considered under suspension of the rules at any time on the legislative day of Sunday, December 18, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, we are gathered here on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in Washington, D.C., December 18, 2005. We have had our priest to open up this beautiful House today, asking that America and Americans understand our responsibilities. We are here today because we still have work yet to be done, but there are people that we need to give thanks to.

Mr. Speaker, our families expected us home weeks ago, but we are here because we have an obligation and a duty.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today under protection of members of the Capitol